


**GUAM MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AUTHORITY  
ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL**

APPROVED	RESPONSIBILITY	EFFECTIVE DATE	NUMBER	PAGE
	Information Technology Administrator (HIPAA Security Officer)	12/2004	6420-13	1 of 3
<b>TITLE: WORKFORCE CLEARANCE PROCEDURE POLICY</b>				

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose is to implement procedures to determine that the access of a workforce member to electronic protected health information (ePHI) is appropriate. This is a standard required under the Administrative Safeguards of the HIPAA Security Rule.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to Guam Memorial Hospital Authority in its entirety, including all workforce members.

**POLICY:**

Guam Memorial Hospital Authority requires that effective personnel screening processes be applied to allow a range of implementation, from minimal procedures to more stringent procedures, based on the results of the risk analysis performed.

The Guam Memorial Hospital Authority has established the following classifications for personnel clearance:

- Level 1: Administrative Staff – this includes receptionists, office managers, and administrative assistants
- Level 2: Clinical Staff – this includes nurses, physicians and other health professionals
- Level 3: Business Staff – this includes accounting, IT, finance and other professionals that provide business and support functions

The Guam Memorial Hospital Authority will identify the list of background investigations that are required for each of the Levels of positions established.

At a minimal, all members of the workforce must be required to adhere to the policies and procedures of the Guam Memorial Hospital Authority to protect ePHI. Each department within the organization must closely review what each staff member is allowed to view or access. All such review requirements must be clearly documented and practiced consistently. Small departments or organizations may decide that stringent requirements are not necessary, while those that work with critical ePHI information may require additional controls and background checks.

Verification checks on members of the workforce should be carried out at the time of job applications by the Human Resources Department.

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This should include the following controls:

- Whether the applicant actually worked for the business during the time period identified in the resume
- Whether the applicant has the academic credentials they claim to have
- Whether the applicant has received the recognition/awards they claim to have
- Availability of satisfactory character references, e.g. one business and one personal
- A check (for completeness and accuracy) of the applicant's curriculum vitae (resume) and application
- Independent identity check (passport or similar document)

Where a job, either on initial appointment or on promotion, involves the person having access to ePHI, and in particular if these are for handling sensitive personal information, e.g. financial information or highly confidential ePHI, the organization should also carry out any other appropriate check.

For staff holding positions of considerable authority this check should be repeated periodically. A similar screening process should be carried out for contractors and temporary staff. Where these staff are provided through an agency the business associate contract with the agency should clearly specify the agency's responsibilities for screening and the notification procedures they need to follow if screening has not been completed or if the results give cause for doubt or concern.

The Guam Memorial Hospital Authority will review the requirements of this procedure with policies related to Person or Entity Authentication and Audit Controls. This is important to show who accessed ePHI.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The HIPAA Security Officer, under the delegated authority of the Hospital Administrator, is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the requirements of the Workforce Clearance Procedure.

The HIPAA Security Officer will maintain a Personnel Clearance List for the Guam Memorial Hospital Authority. This list will be updated each time there is approved change in the clearance level of any member of the workforce.

The HIPAA Security Officer will determine if a clearance change is necessary or if any modifications to privileges are needed as a result of a change in position or responsibility of a member of the workforce. The HIPAA Security Officer will consider the principles of least privilege, need-to-know, Privacy Rule's minimum necessary standard, and separation of duties.

This procedure will be communicated to all business associates of the Guam Memorial Hospital Authority. Based on the type of information processed by the business associate the HIPAA Security Officer may establish certain clearance requirements for the business associate.

#### **COMPLIANCE:**

Failure to comply with this or any other security policy will result in disciplinary actions as per the Sanction Policy 6420-8. Legal actions also may be taken for violations of applicable regulations and laws such as HIPAA.

Workforce Clearance Procedure is an addressable implementation specification defined within the Workforce Security standard (164.308 (a)(3)) in the Administrative Safeguards category of the HIPAA Security Rule.

**REFERENCES:**

- Absolute Backgrounds, [www.AbsoluteBackgrounds.com](http://www.AbsoluteBackgrounds.com)
- Background Check International, [www.bcint.com](http://www.bcint.com)
- Justifacts, [www.justifacts.com](http://www.justifacts.com)
- SafeTrack, [www.safetrack.com](http://www.safetrack.com)
- HIPAA Final Security Rule, 45 CFR Parts 160, 162, and 164, Department of Health and Human Services, <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2/regulations/security/default.asp>, February 20, 2003.
- CMS, "CMS Information Systems Security Policy, Standards and Guidelines Handbook", CMS, February 2002.
- International Standards Organization (ISO/IEC 17799:2000(E)).